

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A-9

NEW YORK TIMES
2 JANUARY 1982

WASHINGTON TALK

Briefing

STAT

FORMER Attorney General Griffin B. Bell is the first of the Georgians from the Carter Administration to complete his memoirs. His book, "Taking Care of the Law," is to be published this summer by the William Morrow Company.

Appropriately, perhaps, the first chapter is called "What Went Wrong?" Some people who have peeked at the work say Mr. Bell is surprisingly frank in assessing the shortcomings of Jimmy Carter's Presidency. Mr. Carter, who is toiling on his own memoirs, has not seen any part of his old friend's manuscript, according to the former Attorney General, but a few Justice Department officials have, at Mr. Bell's insistence.

It was Mr. Bell who brought a civil action against Frank Snepp, the former Central Intelligence Agency operative who neglected to clear his book manuscript with agency officials as required by his employment contract. As a result, the court ordered Mr. Snepp to forfeit all profits from his book, "A Decent Interval," and to clear future manuscripts bearing on his intelligence past with the agency.

Two chapters in Mr. Bell's book deal with intelligence matters, and although he was under no legal obligation to do so, the former Attorney General voluntarily submitted the chapters to the Justice Department for clearance. The review, the first that the Justice Department has ever been involved in, required only minor changes. And Mr. Bell, in addition to any profits he may reap from the book, has the satisfaction of knowing that whatever criticism is hurled at his work, it cannot be speared with the Snepp precedent.

Francis X. Clines
Phil Gailey